

Public Health Broward is a newsletter for the community from the Florida Department of Health in Broward. We will focus on public health issues and services offered by the Department.

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Issue #12

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Public Health Broward

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Test and Treat gives instant medication to those with HIV

The Florida Department of Health in Broward County has launched a new HIV program in which people will be offered a medical visit and medication the very same day they test positive for the virus.

No more waiting weeks for follow-up tests to confirm the HIV diagnosis, which has been the standard practice. No more waiting for people to make appointments to see an HIV primary care doctor. No more having patients lost to care before their first appointment.

The new program called Test and Treat started on May 1, aiming to serve newly diagnosed individuals or those returning to care after a gap in services. It stems from data showing that starting medicine immediately lowers the amount of virus in the blood, which is important for the health of the individual and decreases transmission of the virus.



"Test and Treat benefits people who are newly diagnosed with HIV, as well as our whole community," says Dr. Paula Thaqi, Director of DOH-Broward. It is expected to be a significant new weapon in a community with high rates of HIV infection. In the first four weeks, 66 patients have been enrolled.

DOH-Broward staffs accompany each of the individuals to a physician for an exam and a pharmacy for a 30-day supply of medication. They will be asked to take the first pill on the spot. DOH-Broward is partnering with the Broward County Ryan White Part A office, Ryan White HIV primary care providers and registered HIV testing sites to implement Test and Treat.

Organizations that have agreed to be Test and Treat providers are Broward Health, Memorial Healthcare System, AIDS Healthcare Foundation, Care Resource and the Broward Community and Family Health Centers. The Department is also asking hospitals and private physicians to participate.

People with no health insurance or inadequate coverage can still get medication the same day, through DOH-Broward and the federally funded Ryan White Part A program.

Here's how the new approach helps:

- When HIV virus in the blood is reduced to undetectable levels, people are far less likely to develop complications, or AIDS.
- People with undetectable levels of HIV reduce the chance of transmitting the virus to sexual

- partners to almost zero.
- Starting people immediately on medication reduces the chance they will drop out of treatment, which is a persistent problem.

Research shows that as many as 30 percent of people diagnosed with HIV never return for the first doctor appointment, often out of fear, denial, hopelessness, lack of health insurance or other reasons. They don't receive medication, risking their health and remaining infectious.

People diagnosed with HIV can ask about Test and Treat when they receive their positive test result.

More information: 954-467-4700, Ext. 4991.

Spotlight on ...

New fluoride gel program protects kids' teeth

Parents can get free dental care for children during visit to WIC office



DOH-Broward's dental health program is starting a new free service for children – again. Last year, we began giving dental sealant treatment in the schools. This year, we are offering kids dental fluoride treatment.

Hygienists are going to DOH-Broward's seven Women Infants & Children offices to give a dental exam and tooth-strengthening fluoride varnish to kids on hand for the family's normal WIC appointment.

The varnish is a tasty-flavored fluoride gel that is gently brushed onto a child's teeth to soak in for several hours or overnight. Studies show the varnish can strengthen tooth enamel and help prevent cavities.

"For parents, it's like killing two birds with one stone," says Fanny Crandall, WIC Nutrition Education Supervisor. "It's like going for a dental appointment at the same time you are at WIC."

The new treatment was well received during a one-week study at the WIC office in Lauderdale Lakes. Parents signed permission slips allowing 233 children to get the treatment, far more than expected.

"Parents loved the service. It was such a success that we started up full-time at Lauderdale Lakes on May 8 and plan to be in all WIC sites on July 1," says Dental Administrator Scott Glincher.

The treatment is available for kids ages 1 to 20, and takes just a few minutes. Hygienists give the children

an exam, a toothbrush and floss, and show them the proper way to care for their teeth.

Then they paint on the varnish, which comes in caramel, mint and fruit flavors. All children who are seen are offered a free or low-cost appointment at DOH-Broward dental practice offices. There, they can see a dentist for more extensive dental care.

Broward's dental varnish program is expected to quickly become the largest in the state, says Dental Executive Director Dr. Ernest "Steve" Alder.

"This is a great service that will dovetail well into our children's dental practices," Alder says.

Photo: Hygienist Sharon Simpson applies dental varnish for Jose Perdomo, 12, of Sunrise

[Guard against summer mosquitoes -- and Zika virus](#)

Rainy season is right around the corner and that means one thing – protect yourself and your family from mosquitoes.

The bug to watch for is the *Aedes* mosquito, a small biter that is black with white spots and lives right outside or inside your house. They specialize in biting humans, and stay active all day.

Aedes mosquitoes carry Zika virus and other tropical viruses such as chikungunya and dengue fever. Last year, Florida reported 1,450 cases of Zika and 53 so far this year. All cases this year were in people who contracted the virus while traveling overseas.

Zika generally causes mild symptoms in adults and children, but it can cause severe birth defects to the unborn child of a woman who contracts the virus.

Zika may appear again this year when rains hatch mosquito eggs. Floridians should not become complacent about mosquito protection.

"Everyone should be aware of mosquitoes and take steps to protect themselves," says Dr. Paula Thaqi, Director of the Florida Department of Health in Broward County. "The best way to do that is to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. We recommend a practice called Drain and Cover."

Drain standing water in and around the house. Eliminate even puddles because *Aedes* can breed in containers as small as a bottle cap.



Get rid of water that collects in garbage cans, tires, buckets, roof gutters, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots and plants with pockets, such as bromeliads. Discard items where rain or sprinkler water collects. Clean bird baths and pet water bowls twice a week.

Inside the home, *Aedes* can breed where water collects, such as refrigerator ice makers, electric toothbrush holders and drips under sinks.

Cover yourself and the openings in your home. If you go outdoors when mosquitoes are active, wear shoes, socks, long pants and long sleeves. Spray your skin and clothing with repellent containing DEET or other approved ingredients (check the label). Keep windows and doors closed, and repair damaged screening.

More information: www.floridahealth.gov/zika
Receive educational materials: 954-213-0607

Save time and trouble: Pre-register for special needs shelter



Hurricane season is quickly approaching. That means people with special medical issues should take a moment to register in advance for a special needs shelter.

The Florida Department of Health in Broward County, in partnership with Broward County government, is responsible for ensuring that clients with special medical needs are triaged and placed in special needs shelters during severe weather events. It will be much smoother and easier for people to come to special needs shelters if they are pre-registered. Transportation can be arranged, paperwork is done and delays are cut.

Anyone with special needs should take the step, and health care practitioners and providers can help by identifying and encouraging clients with special needs to pre-register.

To be eligible, an adult or child must not need hospitalization but must meet one or more of these criteria:

- has special medical needs
- needs care that exceeds aid provided at general shelters
- has impairments or disabilities that are medically stable
- is dependent upon a health care professional to perform daily assessment and administer care
- requires minimal assistance
- depends on oxygen therapy
- is medically dependent on uninterrupted electricity
- has mental or cognitive limitations requiring assistance and is accompanied by a full-time caregiver
- is a hospice client if accompanied by caregiver or hospice nurse
- is a person whose weight does not exceed the safety weight restrictions of provided cots (after supply of hospital beds and bariatric cots are exhausted)

The adult application is available at: www.broward.org/Hurricane/AtRisk/Pages/SpecialNeeds.aspx. It is printed in English, Spanish and Creole.

The pediatric application is available in English, Spanish, Creole and Portuguese at: <http://broward.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/emergency-preparedness-and-response/hurricanes/index.html>.

The application should be completed by the client's primary doctor (if possible), or by the client or a

guardian, and mailed to:

ADULT
Special Needs Registry
Broward County Emergency Management Division
201 NW 84th Ave., Plantation, FL 33324

PEDIATRIC
Special Needs Registry
Florida Department of Health in Broward County
780 SW 24th St., Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315
OR fax pediatric application to 954-767-5155

Photo: Community Health Nurse Eileen McAvoy assists a woman at a Special Needs Shelter during Hurricane Matthew last year

[Taking positive actions to prevent tragedies of drowning, suicide](#)

The subjects were not pleasant – child drowning deaths and youth suicides.

But the response from the public was very positive at two daylong workshops developed and organized by DOH-Broward and partner organizations.

Nearly 300 people came to each of the workshops at Sunrise Civic Center, surprisingly large turnouts for first-time educational sessions designed to raise awareness in the community.

“These are two important public health challenges that we are working on with our



community partners,” says Dr. Paula Thaqi, Director of DOH-Broward.

The First Annual South Florida Water Safety Symposium attracted health care professionals, fire-rescue officials, drowning prevention advocates, the swimming pool industry and the public from Broward, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties.

Keynote speaker Dr. Edna Tello of Coral Springs told the group about pediatric care issues. An expert panel

and speakers at several breakout sessions covered topics in depth.

The meeting was significant for bringing together numerous community resources in one place, says DOH-Broward Drowning Prevention Coordinator Cassie McGovern. McGovern hosted the event and was one of several parents who described their personal tragedies of losing a child to the water.

The Youth Suicide Prevention Symposium (*left*) grew out of conversations at meetings of the Broward County Community School Health Advisory Committee, which is led by DOH-Broward.

The room filled with nurses, health professionals, social service staffers, educators and parents eager to learn about a rise in suicide and suicidal thoughts among Broward high school and middle school students.

The event included segments on the numbers of suicide, warning signs and a panel discussion about steps that can prevent teen suicide.

A key was sharing resources so people know who does what and where to call for help, says DOH-Broward School Health Program Manager Maureen O’Keeffe.

The highlight, Ms. O’Keeffe says, was the screening of a gripping, feature-length film on teen suicide, “Listen: It Only Takes a Moment,” and a discussion session with the filmmaker, Erahm Christopher.

More information: 954-467-4700, Ext. 5695 for Ms. McGovern, Ext. 3014 for Ms. O’Keeffe.

Top photo: Drowning Prevention Coordinator Cassie McGovern (center) comforts Christina Martin speaking about the loss of her son, Gunner. Also there were (from left) Dean Haller, who lost his adult son Benjo, Health Educator Nadia Willy and Chastity Prescott, whose daughter survived a non-fatal case.

[A nurse's nutritious tour through the supermarket](#)

By Kristin Halldorsdottir, RN

Florida Department of Health in Broward County

Over the years, I've learned to be a savvy shopper.

They say the first rule of grocery shopping is, don't go on an empty stomach. It's true. It can lead you into all sorts of temptations, like the smell from the bakery or that fried chicken. Walk away!

If you have a grocery list, you are already a star. Organize your list into sections such as fresh produce, dairy, etc.

I shop the perimeter of the supermarket first to find produce, meat, fish and dairy. Most of the time, those foods are all I need for my family.

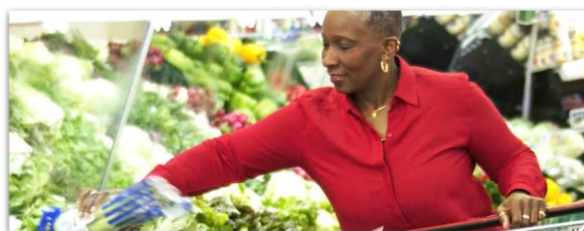
I keep track of sell-by dates so I know when I will use those products. I hate wasting food. By the weekend, the fridge and cabinets are bare – just the way I like it.

I love the produce department, so colorful and full of nutrients. Each color reflects the different vitamin, mineral and phytonutrient content of each item. I didn't grow up with many fruits and vegetables, but I have developed a taste for them. On Sundays, I make a big salad, ready for dinner and lunch the next day.

If you work upfront, it's easier to stay on track. When I know I'm baking potatoes or roasting chicken, I also roast vegetables at the same time.

I like to feel that what I put into my body is doing me good. Don't get me wrong, I love chocolate and ice cream, but I try to keep them in small portions. If it's in the house, I eat it, so I try not to have those temptations.

Don't forget dairy products. Low-fat milk for cereal is a perfect way to get the calcium you need. Add a banana and you're set to start your day. Yogurt comes in many forms now, but check the sugar content. My current favorite is plain. I add fresh strawberries or a little honey.



When I go to the middle aisles, I pick up a few items like coffee and canned goods, such as beans and tomatoes (low sodium, of course) for soups, stews and chicken or vegetable stock.

When it comes to bread, I look for high fiber, low sugar. Just because it says whole wheat doesn't mean it is good for you. It's so important to read all labels. You will be stunned to see the amount of sugar some food contains. It takes a bit of time, but you will find a product that suits you and you can stick with. Your palate adjusts quicker than you think.

If you are looking for frozen meals as a quick go-to for work lunch, choose meals low in carbs and high in protein.

More information: www.healthiestweightflorida.com

[Dania Beach Housing Authority goes smoke-free in public complex](#)

Dania Beach Housing Authority has become the latest public housing entity to ban smoking on the grounds, in cooperation with DOH-Broward.

Residents at the agency's Saratoga Apartments complex will be prohibited from using inhaled nicotine products inside their units or anywhere in the common areas, including the outside grounds.

The Dania Beach ban includes e-cigarettes, which is not always the case with some no-smoking policies at other public housing and multi-family complexes, says Senior Health Educator Jordan Boudlal of the Tobacco Prevention program, who worked on the agreement.

Saratoga Apartments has 39 three-bedroom units in two buildings at 715 W. Dania Beach Blvd. The housing authority is in the process of renovating the complex, and the smoking ban will start when the work is completed, estimated in about July.

Boudlal, who specializes in reducing inhaled nicotine usage at multi-family housing, says he is also working with other public housing agencies. Several complexes of Fort Lauderdale and Broward County authorities have already gone smoke-free.

More information: 954-467-4700, Ext. 5809.

[Our Programs, Services and Locations](#)

- * [Breast and Cervical Cancer](#) – Mammograms, pap smears, diagnostic testing, medical referrals and education for eligible women
- * [Dental Care](#) – High-quality dental services for children and for adults in the Ryan White Part A program. Also [School-Based Dental Sealant program](#)
- * [Drowning Prevention](#) -- Information and advocacy to prevent childhood drownings
- * [Emergency Response](#) -- Planning, training and response to address emergencies
- * [Environmental Health](#) -- Inspections, permits and sanitary nuisance complaints
- * [Epidemiology](#) -- Monitoring, investigation and control of infectious disease outbreaks, and data collection
- * [Family Planning](#) -- Exams, counseling, birth control and sterilization
- * [Hepatitis](#) – Testing, vaccination, diagnosis and medical referrals
- * [HIV/AIDS Testing](#) – At our locations or in the community
- * [Immunizations](#) – Childhood and adult vaccines
- * [KidCare Outreach](#) -- Recruiting and enrolling families in state-sponsored health coverage for children
- * [Pharmacy](#) – Medications for clients enrolled in AIDS Drug Assistance Program, Ryan White Part A program and our services

- * [Refugee Health](#) – Testing, immunizations and medical referrals
- * [School Health](#) -- Nursing care and health service in schools
- * [Sexually Transmitted Diseases](#) (STD) – Surveillance and partner services. Testing and treatment provided by the Broward Wellness Center under contract with DOH-Broward
- * [Tobacco Prevention](#) -- Education and advocacy to reduce tobacco usage
- * [Tuberculosis](#) – Testing, diagnosis, treatment and directly observed therapy
- * [Vital Records](#) -- Birth and death certificates
- * [Women, Infants and Children \(WIC\)](#) – Breastfeeding support, nutrition counseling, nutritious foods and referrals

HEALTH CENTERS and WOMEN INFANTS AND CHILDREN (WIC) OFFICES



Edgar P. Mills Health Center | 900 NW 31st Ave., Fort Lauderdale

Fort Lauderdale Health Center | 2421 SW 6th Ave.

Paul Hughes Health Center | 205 NW Sixth Ave., Pompano Beach (No WIC)

North Regional Health Center | 601 W. Atlantic Blvd., Pompano Beach

South Regional Health Center | 4105 Pembroke Rd., Hollywood

WIC-ONLY OFFICES

Coral Springs | 10077 NW 29th Street

Lauderdale Lakes | 4481 North State Road 7

Pembroke Pines | 8374 Pines Boulevard

OTHER

Administrative Center | 780 SW 24th Street, Fort Lauderdale

Operations Center | 2421-A SW 6th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale

CALL FOR APPOINTMENTS: [Health centers](#) 954-467-4705 or [WIC](#) 954-767-5111

Editor's note on Issue #12

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Mission: To protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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